

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL MEMORANDUM

HB 322 - SB 521

April 3, 2021

**SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL BILL:** Increases the current discount available to veterans, who are Tennessee residents and have any service-connected disability that is determined by the Veterans Administration to constitute a 100 percent permanent total disability, from 50 percent to 100 percent, applicable to camping fees, and in addition, establishes that such discount applies to overnight lodging fees at state parks as well. Such discount is only applicable to a maximum of 3 overnight stays, each of which cannot exceed 3 days in duration. Such discount is subject to the availability of camping or overnight lodging accommodations. Establishes that such maximum duration is limited to each calendar year. In addition, creates a new year-round discount for veterans with any service-connected disability equal to no less than 50 percent of camping fees at state parks. Such disability must constitute a 100 percent permanent total disability, as confirmed by the Veterans Administration.

**CORRECTED FISCAL IMPACT OF ORIGINAL BILL:**

Decrease State Revenue - \$62,800/FY21-22 and Subsequent Years/  
State Parks Fund

Increase State Expenditures - \$52,000/FY21-22/General Fund

**SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS (004965, 006615):** Amendment 004965 deletes all language after the enacting clause. Establishes that the current discount applicable to camping fees at state parks of at least 50 percent, available to veterans who are Tennessee residents and have any service-connected disability that is determined by the Veterans Administration to constitute a 100 percent permanent total disability, also applies to overnight lodging fees at state parks. Establishes that such discounts only apply to reservations made within 30 days of the intended stay.

Amendment 006615 adds language to the legislation as amended by amendment 004965 requiring the Commissioner of the Department of Environment and Conservation to promulgate rules.

**FISCAL IMPACT OF BILL WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:**

Decrease State Revenue – Exceeds \$35,200/FY21-22 and Subsequent Years/  
State Parks Fund

Assumptions for the bill as amended:

- Currently, the Tennessee State Parks offer a discount for camping of at least 50 percent to veterans with a service-connected disability that is determined by the Veterans Administration to constitute a 100 percent permanent total disability.
- The number of such veterans eligible to receive a discount in Tennessee is estimated to be around 21,355.
- Based on information provided by the Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), the total camping discounts provided to veterans with 100 percent service-connected disabilities was equal to \$10,052 in FY19-20.
- This legislation also will authorize a minimum of a 50 percent discount for overnight cabin lodging fees.
- Lodging sites include 372 cabins.
- Based on information from the TDEC, the average fees for either a campsite, cabin, or lodge are \$83.33 per night.
- It is assumed that beginning in FY21-22, approximately one percent, or 211 (21,135 x 1%), of such veterans will utilize this new, 50 percent discount.
- An average of four nights stays per year per veteran.
- A recurring decrease in state revenue to the State Parks Fund of \$35,153, beginning in FY21-22 and subsequent years (211 veterans x 4 overnight stays x \$83.33 x 50%).
- A total recurring decrease in state revenue to the State Parks Fund exceeding \$35,153 beginning in FY21-22.
- Any impact on TDEC to implement such additional discounts is estimated to be not significant.

## **CERTIFICATION:**

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krista Lee Carsner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

/jw